Message Text

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 07631 070807Z ACTION NEA-07

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R 070640Z NOV 77 FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA TO SECSTATE WASHDC 105 INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECRE, SA, SU, EG

SUBJECT: SEROP NERSESIAN'S PROJECT

REF: A) STATE 254721 B) KHARTOUM 3826 C) CAIRO 18164

1. SAUDI REACTION TO NERSESIAN PLAN WOULD, IT SEEMS TO US, BE HIGHLY INFLUENCED BY QUESTION OF SECURITY. WE DOUBT, IN SHORT, IF SAG WOULD BE PREPARED TO RELY FOR MAJOR PORTION OF ITS WATER SUPPLY ON SOURCES BEYOND ITS CONTROL. DESALINATION SCHEMES, EVEN IF EXPENSIVE TO OPERATE,

DO GIVE POLITICALLY SECURE SUPPLY (AS WELL AS SUPPLYING NEEDED ELECTRIC

POWER). WE NOTE IN THIS RESPECT THAT MAJOR DESALINATION CONTRACTS FOR SAUDI ARABIA'S RED SEA COAST AREAS ARE ALREADY LET OR IN THE PROCESS OF

NEGOTIATION FOR WATER NEEDS FORESEEN THROUGH APPROXIMATELY 1990.

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2. IT NONETHELESS

SEEMS POSSIBLE THAT NERSESIAN MIGHT BE ABLE TO FIND SAUDI ENTREPRENEUR WITH SUFFICIENT IMAGINATION TO SPONSOR OR HELP ARRANGE FEASIBILITY STUDY. ADNAN KHASHOGGI, WHO WE UNDERSTAND HAS SIGNIFICANT INTEREST IN SUDAN DEVELOPMENT, OR GHAITH PHARAON OF REDEC, COME MOST READILY TO MIND. WE DOUBT IF SAUDI FUND FOR DEVELOPMENT WOULD TAKE ON THIS PROJECT UNLESS IT WERE PUSHED

BY GOVERNMENT OF SUDAN.

3. POSSIBILITY OF SUCCESSFUL VISIT HERE BY NERSESIAN IN MID-NOVEMBER IS VIRTUALLY NIL. PILGRIMAGE SEASON WILL OCCUPY FULL ATTENTION OF ALMOST ALL IMPORTANT SAG FIGURES, AND IMPORTANT BUSINESSMEN ARE LIKELY TO BE ENTERTAINING MUSLIM VISITORS OR AWAY ON VACATIONS. WE BELIEVE NERSESIAN'S BEST COURSE WOULD BE TO SOUND OUT SAUDI BUSINESSMEN WE HAVE MENTIONED ABOVE ON THEIR POSSIBLE INTEREST IN HIS PROJECT, AND AVAILABILITY TO DISCUSS IT, BEFORE ARRANGING TRIP TO SAUDI ARABIA.

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Message Attributes

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